GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:540
ANSWERED ON:28.04.2003
IRRIGATION POTENTIAL
RAMJI MANJHI

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether additional irrigation potential created through components of projects covered under Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP) is much less as against the ultimateirrigation potential as brought out by the Standing Committee on Agriculture during 1999-2000;

(b) if so, whether the Government have ascertained the reasons for the shortcomings in the programme;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken to achieve the targeted irrigation potential expeditiously?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI)

(a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENTREFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OFLOK SABHA STARREDQUESTIONNO.540 FOR ANSWER ON 28.4.2003 REGARDING IRRIGATION POTENTIAL

(a) to (d) Irrigation being a State subject, the responsibility of planning, investigation, funding alongwith priority, execution, operation and maintenance of irrigation projects, including irrigation and flood control primarily rests with the concerned State Governments themselves.

Concerned with a large number of major and medium irrigation projects spilling over into IX Plan,the Central Government launched the Accelerate Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) during1996-97 for accelerating implementation of such ongoing irrigation/multi-purpose projects on which substantial progress has been made and which are beyond the resources capability of the State Governments and for other major and medium irrigation projects which are in an advanced stage of completion and could yield irrigation benefits in next four agricultural seasons. Upto 2000, 112 major/medium irrigation projects were included under AIBP. The ultimate irrigation potential of these projects were 13801 thousand hectare out of which irrigation potential of 817 thousand hectare were created by the end of 1999-2000. Gradually the projects under the programme increased to 150 by 2001-02 and an irrigation potential of 1974 thousand hectare has been created upto March, 2002. A total of 21 projects could be completed after commencement of programme and potential of 404.48 thousand hectare was created on completion of these projects. As on 31st March, 2003, 172 Major/Medium and 5382 minor irrigation schemes have been provided with Central Loan Assistance (CLA) amounting to Rs. 11541.7314 crore. When the AIBP was commenced in 1996-97 the schemesincluded were in a dormant stage. Considering the period of completion of 10 to 15 years for major projects and 5 years for medium irrigation projects, the additional potential could flow only after 4 to 5 years. The Planning Commission reviewedthe programme and identified the shortcomings like shortage of funds with States, delay in timely release of funds to the projects from the State's Finance Department, delay in providing required approvals, land acquisition problems, change in scope of work, technical snag, etc. Further, completion of head works and idle length of canals were also not adding to the creation of potential.

To overcome such shortcomings periodic review of the programme was taken up and modifications in the guidelines introduced from time to time to make the programme effective and achieve the targets. The funds were released in the form of CLA on matching basis. Considering the poor financial position of the States, funding pattern under AIBP was revised in 1997-98and in 1999-2000. According to revised funding pattern with effect from 1999-2000, the CLAis being released to the Special Category States comprising the North Eastern States, hilly States ofJammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Sikkim aswell as Kalahandi, Bolangir and Koraput (KBK) districts of Orissain 3:1 (Centre : State) ratio, whereas, the ratio is 2:1 for other General Category States. In addition, all minor projects (both ongoing and new) of the Special Category States and KBK districts of Orissa are also being provided CLA in 3:1 ratio. AIBP Guidelineshave been further modified with effect from February, 2002 to give incentive to reforming States by providing CLA in the ratio of 1:0 (Centre : State) for special Category States and4:1 (Centre : State) for General Category. Projects which can be completed in one year (two working seasons) are included under Fast Track Programme, a component of AIBP, and provided with 100% CLA.